THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The following areas in the agriculture sector have been identified for focused and priority attention under National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP):

(i) Farmers will be given greater say in the organization that supply inputs to them.

(ii) The UPA Government will bring forward a Constitutional Amendment to ensure the democratic, autonomous and professional functioning of cooperatives.

(iii) Controls that depress the incomes of farmers will be systematically removed.

(iv) Crop insurance schemes to be made more effective.

(v) The UPA Government will introduce a special programme for dryland farming in the arid and semi-arid regions of the country.

(vi) The UPA Government will ensure that adequate protection is provided to all farmers from imports, particularly when international prices fall sharply.

(vii) The UPA Government will ensure that public investment in rural infrastructure is stepped up in a significant manner at the very earliest. The UPA will pay special attention to augmenting and modernizing rural infrastructure consisting of irrigation; cold-chain; and marketing outlets.

(viii) The UPA Government will ensure that public investment in agricultural research and extension is stepped up in a significant manner at the very earliest.

(ix) The UPA Government will take steps to ensure that dues to all farmers including sugarcane farmers will be cleared at the earliest.

(b) and (c) These programmes are on-going nature and their progress is regularly monitored for effective implementation.

MSP for coarse grains

†3046. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to fix the support price of coarse

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

grains like corn, barley and millet alongwith the purchase of these grains at that price;

(b) Whether this action of Government would help the farmers of the dry and semi-dry areas to get the better price of their produce alongwith food safety for them; and

(c) whether with this step the demand of the wheat would come down because of which its import will not be required?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Government announces Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) of Maize (Corn), Barley and millets (Bajra, Jowar and Ragi), each year. The MSPs are aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the produce and they are uniform through public and cooperatives agencies. Food security is taken care of by the welfare schemes such as Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana. (SGRY).

(c) The procurement of coarse grains is undertaken by the State Government and their Agencies. The demand for wheat is unlikely to be significantly affected due to procurement of coarse grains.

Suicide cases

†3047. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of total suicides being committed in the country, 16 per cent suicides are being committed by the farmers only;

(b) if not, the facts thereof and whether the Tata Institute of Social

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